

**Thomas Jefferson to John Stuart, November 10, 1796,  
The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes.  
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Ford.**

**TO COLONEL JOHN STUART J. MSS.**

Monticello, Nov. 10, 1796.

Dear Sir, —I have to acknowledge the receipt of your last favor, together with the bones of the Great-claw, which accompanied it. My anxiety to obtain a thigh bone is such, that I defer communicating what we have to the Philosophical society, in the hope of adding that bone to the collection. We should then be able to fix the stature of the animal, without going into conjecture & calculation, as we should possess a whole limb, from the haunch bone to the claw inclusive. Whenever you announce to me that the recovery of a thigh bone is desperate, I shall make the communication to the Philosophical society. I think it happy that this incident will make known to them a person so worthy as yourself to be taken into their body, and without whose attention to these extraordinary remains, the world might have been deprived of the knowledge of them. I cannot, however, help believing that this animal, as well as the mammoth, are still existing. The annihilation of any species of existence, is so unexampled in any parts of the economy of nature which we see, that we have a right to conclude, as to the parts we do not see, that the probabilities against such annihilation are stronger than those for it. In hopes of hearing from you, as soon as you can form a conclusion satisfactory to yourself, that the thigh bone will or will not be recovered, I remain, with great respect & esteem, Dear Sir, your most obedient servant.